

Message Text

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ACTION HEW-06

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TAGS: TGEN IN

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCREENING COMMITTEE
FOR JOINT INDO-US RUPEE PROJECTS

1. THE GOI HAS CONSTITUTED A NEW INTERMINISTERIAL SCREENING
COMMITTEE UNDER THE SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FINANCE, TO REVIEW ALL
INDO-US JOINT SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH PROPOSALS SUBMITTED FOR
US-OWNED RUPEE SUPPORT UNDER THE SPECIAL FOREIGN CURRENCY PROGRAM.

2. THE COMMITTEE IS COMPOSED OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

1. MR. M.G. KAUL, CHAIRMAN, SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF FINANCE;
2. MR. L. KUMAR, ADVISOR, PLANNING COMMISSION;
3. MR. K.P. SINGH, JOINT SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH EDUCATION;
4. MR. M.K. KUTTY, JOINT SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING);
5. MRS. SARLA GREWAL, JOINT SECRETARY, FAMILY PLANNING
DEPARTMENT (MOHFP);
6. DR. R.D. DESHPANDE, DIRECTOR INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY, DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY;
7. MR. K N CHANNA, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL
WELFARE;
8. MR. P K KATHPALIA, JOINT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS;
9. MR. H K D TANDON, JOINT SECRETARY (PLANNING AND
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COORDINATION), DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE;

10. DR. NITYA NAND, DIRECTOR, CENTRAL DRUG RESEARCH INSTITUTE, LUCKNOW (COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH);

11. DR. N K ANANT RAO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL, INDIAN COUNCIL FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH;

12. DR. C. GOPALAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL, INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH;

13. DR. D. SHANKAR NARAYAN, ADDITIONAL SECRETARY, UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION.

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS PERMANENT COMMITTEE WAS RECOMMENDED BY THE CABINET SECRETARY, MR. PANDE, AND A SMALL MINISTERIAL LEVEL COMMITTEE, TO REVIEW ALL SFC RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT HAVE BEEN TECHNICALLY CLEARED THROUGH THE MINISTRIES AND RESEARCH COUNCILS. THIS FINAL REVIEW WOULD BE FOR FINANCIAL, POLITICAL, AND NATIONAL SECURITY REASONS AND IF THE PROPOSALS MEET INDIA'S BROAD RESEARCH PRIORITIES AS RELATED IN THE FIFTH FIVE YEAR PLAN. WE UNDERSTAND THAT WHEN PROJECTS ARE CLEARED BY THIS NEW COMMITTEE, THIS WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO FINAL GOI APPROVAL.

4. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS COMMITTEE IS IN RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORT OF APRIL 1975, CRITICIZING THE GOVERNMENT FOR NOT HAVING A TIGHT APPROVAL MECHANISM TO REVIEW ALL FOREIGN RESEARCH PROPOSALS FROM THESE ASPECTS. ON PROPOSALS THAT SEEM TO BE OF A SENSITIVE NATURE, THE CONCERNED MINISTRIES WILL HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CLEARING FIRST WITH THE CABINET SECRETARY.

5. THE PROCEDURE NOW ESTABLISHED FOR JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDED BY USG-OWNED RUPEES UNDER THE SFCP IS AS FOLLOWS:

A) RESEARCH PROPOSAL IS PREPARED BY INDIAN INVESTIGATOR IN A RESEARCH INSTITUTE (SOMETIMES IN COORDINATION WITH US COLLABORATION).

B) PROPOSAL IS CLEARED BY INSTITUTE DIRECTOR AND SENT TO PERTINENT RESEARCH COUNCIL OR SCREENING COMMITTEE (HEALTH, AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, ETC.).

C) PROPOSAL IS REVIEWED BY RESEARCH COUNCIL OR UNCLASSIFIED

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SCREENING COMMITTEE FOR TECHNICAL MERIT AND INDIAN RESEARCH PRIORITIES.

D) IF PROPOSAL IS CLEARED IT IS FORWARDED TO CONCERNED MINISTRY FOR REVIEW.

E) MINISTRY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING CLEARANCE OF NEW MINISTRY OF FINANCE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCREENING

COMMITTEE.

F) IF PROPOSAL IS CLEARED BY MOF SCREENING COMMITTEE, IT IS RETURNED TO THE MINISTRY WHO WILL FORWARD IT TO THE US EMBASSY WITH A REQUEST FOR SUPPORT BY US GOVERNMENT.

6. THE MOF SCREENING COMMITTEE HAS NOT YET CONVENED FOR A FIRST MEETING. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE THE COMMITTEE HAS APPROXIMATELY 50 TO 60 PROPOSALS THEY ARE HOLDING FOR CLEARANCE. WE ASSUME THE COMMITTEE WILL NOT MEET UNTIL THE GOI HAS COMPLETED ITS REVIEW OF ONGOING SFC RESEARCH PROJECTS AND IT HAS DETERMINED THE RELATIONSHIP OF SFC FUNDED RESEARCH ACTIVITIES TO THE FUNCTIONS OF THE S AND T SUBCOMMISSION.

7. WE UNDERSTAND THAT WHILE THE SCREENING COMMITTEE WAS GENERATED BY POLITICAL CONCERN ABOUT US PROJECTS, CONSIDERATION IS BEING GIVEN TO APPLYING SIMILAR STANDARDS TO SCIENTIFIC PROJECTS FROM ALL SOURCES THROUGH THE SAME INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE. THE EMBASSY STRONGLY BELIEVES THIS WOULD BE THE PROPER COURSE FOR THE GOI TO TAKE AND INTENDS TO QUERY M.G. KAUL AT AN EARLY APPROPRIATE TIME ON THIS POINT. WHILE OUR INTERESTS ARE SERVED BY HAVING THE GOI CONFIRM AT AN INTERAGENCY LEVEL THAT US PROJECTS IN INDIA ARE APPROVED AND WELCOMED BY THE GOVERNMENT, WE DO NOT LIKE THE APPEARANCE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH AN INTERAGENCY SCREENING COMMITTEE FOR THE US ALONE.SAXBE

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